



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**NEWS RELEASE**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced the sentencings today of Francisco ("Frank") Martinez and his wife, Miriam Martinez, both of Stafford, Virginia, on federal charges of conspiracy to commit identification fraud. The Honorable Leonie M. Brinkema, U.S. District Court Judge, sentenced Frank Martinez to 27 months of imprisonment and Miriam Martinez to 21 months of imprisonment for their involvement in the conspiracy. Both Frank and Miriam Martinez previously pled guilty to conspiracy to commit identification document fraud for their involvement in issuing and selling genuine Virginia driver's licenses.

Until his arrest in July of 2005, Frank Martinez, age 57, was the manager of the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) customer service center at the Springfield Mall in Springfield, Virginia, and had been a DMV employee since 1990. Miriam Martinez, age 57, worked as a clerk at the DMV in Tyson's Corner, Virginia, from 1996-1998 and then again briefly in 2003.

The defendants, as former DMV employees, were intimately familiar with the procedures and policies of the DMV with regard to eligibility for obtaining driver's licenses. For approximately four years, Frank and Miriam Martinez were the critical players in a conspiracy to produce and sell authentic Virginia driver's licenses to immigrants unlawfully in the United States and other unqualified applicants in exchange for fees of up to \$3,500.

Frank Martinez abused his position from within DMV to produce driver's licenses for immigrants located and sent to the DMV customer service center by his wife, Miriam, and another conspirator. He falsified DMV computer records to make it appear that the immigrants who received the licenses were residents who had recently moved to Virginia from another state. Specifically, he would falsely record in the DMV computer system that the immigrant applicant had surrendered a valid driver's license from another state, knowing that the applicant surrendered no license at all and never lived in that state. Miriam Martinez served as the critical link between her husband and the unqualified applicants. She would obtain the names and other personal information that the unqualified applicants wanted their licenses to bear, to pass along to her husband. She would also provide instructions to the unqualified applicants and collect

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fees from them. In return for a genuine Virginia driver's license, each immigrant was charged a fee of up to \$3,500. In most cases the immigrants buying the licenses were not qualified to obtain a valid Virginia driver's license because they were unlawfully present in the United States or because their driving privileges had been suspended.

As a result of their joint actions, Frank and Miriam Martinez allowed numerous illegal immigrants to conceal their true identities and obtain valid identification documents that they then could and did use for commercial and other reasons. Frank and Miriam Martinez did so with blatant disregard for the consequences and ramifications of providing illegal immigrants with legitimate documents.

The cases against Frank and Miriam Martinez were the result of an investigation by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles and the Diplomatic Security Service of the Department of State. Assistant United States Attorneys John T. Morton and Stephanie Bibighaus Hammerstrom prosecuted the cases for the government.

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